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Letter dated 21 April 2015 from the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith a Co-Chairs' statement from the high-level meeting of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform held in New York on 12 February 2015 (see annex), which was signed on 14 April 2015 by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations, Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, and the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations, Ambassador František Ružička.

The Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform intends to hold a ministerial meeting during the seventieth session of the General Assembly to consider the link between security sector reform and the post-2015 development agenda, with particular emphasis on security sector reform as a link between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and hence as an important element of sustainable development for countries coming out of conflict.

We should be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) František **Ružička**
Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Kingsley **Mamabolo**
Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 21 April 2015 from the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

High-level meeting of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform: security sector reform: consolidating priorities and looking beyond 2015

Co-Chairs' summary

On 12 February 2015, the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform held a high-level meeting co-chaired by Slovakia and South Africa and organized in cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme, Co-Chairs of the inter-agency Security Sector Reform Task Force. It brought together over 60 Member States, as well as observers. The objective of the meeting was to consolidate the priorities that should guide the implementation of Security Council resolution 2151 (2014), the first stand-alone resolution on security sector reform. The meeting also considered security sector reform in the context of the review of peace operations and that of the peacebuilding architecture, as well as the relevance of security sector reform in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

František Ružička, the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations, opened the meeting. Keynote speakers included H.E. Sam Kutesa, President of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly; H.E. Jan Eliasson, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General; H.E. Miroslav Lajčák, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs, Slovak Republic; H.E. Kingsley Mamabolo, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations; H.E. Bård Glad Pedersen, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway; H.E. Irakli Sesiashvili, Chair of the Defense and Security Committee of the Parliament of Georgia; H.E. Joy Ogwu, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations; Mr. Magdy Martínez-Solimán, Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, United Nations Development Programme; and Mr. Dmitry Titov, Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions.

During the discussion, representatives of numerous Member States took the floor, including Australia, Brazil, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey and Uganda. African Union and European Union representatives also took the floor.

Consolidation of priorities for Security Council resolution 2151 (2014)

Drawing on the remarks of keynote speakers and messages delivered during the discussion, four areas emerged as priorities for the implementation of Security Council resolution 2151 (2014):

- Security sector reform must be firmly placed within legitimate national political agreements, including through its consistent integration into peace processes and through the good offices of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and senior leaders on the ground.

- The United Nations should further enhance integrated approaches of its security sector reform support to ensure coherence among the numerous United Nations actors that are engaged.
- Partnerships with regional and subregional organizations should be deepened to ensure sufficient capacity for security sector reform delivery and enhanced coordination of support on the ground.
- Monitoring and evaluation of security sector reform support should be strengthened to guide efforts towards enhanced impact on the ground.

Security sector reform must be firmly placed within legitimate political agreements

Security sector reform mandates are often understood and approached as technical capacity-building programmes, without the necessary political frameworks and agreements on key principles, mechanisms of implementation, benchmarks and overall objective of the security sector reform process, as relevant to the given context. This undermines the potential of security sector reform as a stabilization and peacemaking tool. Technical support to security sector reform is only sustainable if firmly linked to political dialogue that can ensure commitment to principles of democratic governance throughout the different stages of a security sector reform process. To implement Security Council resolution 2151 (2014), it will be important to ensure the integration of security sector reform into peace processes, national reconciliation frameworks and other political platforms. Moreover, security sector reform should be better mainstreamed into the good offices and functions of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and senior leaders in the field, including through the development of security sector reform compacts with national counterparts. Also, senior leaders should receive targeted training, tools and expertise to assist their engagement in security sector reform.

It was recognized that new security threats increasingly demand security sector reform support that is focused on training and equipping security forces to enhance their operational effectiveness. To ensure that these efforts do not undermine the long-term stability and sustainability of reforms, it is imperative to ensure that such efforts are linked to political engagement that fosters national ownership and commitment to the inclusiveness, responsiveness and accountability of security forces.

Integrated security sector reform support among the numerous United Nations actors that are engaged

Mandates for security sector reform support have increased dramatically in number and complexity over the past seven years, leaving the United Nations often underresourced to meet these growing demands. In this regard, it was repeatedly emphasized that existing resources need to be better integrated and linked to overall national security sector reform strategies and priorities, as relevant. In particular, it was stressed that in mission settings many components have important roles to play in the delivery of security sector reform mandates, as well as, most notably, those dedicated security sector reform capacities that deal with political processes, policing, defence and governance. The reviews of peace operations and of the peacebuilding architecture were emphasized as critical in addressing the identified

challenges and in laying the foundations for the implementation of Security Council resolution 2151 (2014).

Partnerships with regional and subregional organizations

It was recognized that important progress has been made in building partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Broad frameworks that outline the principles and approaches to security sector reform support have been put in place by the African Union, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform, the inter-agency Security Sector Reform Task Force and the Security Sector Reform Unit played an important role in linking these efforts, sharing information and supporting compatibility of the frameworks.

Agreement emerged on the need to further enhance existing partnerships, and, where needed, to develop new ones, in order to strengthen the impact of international security sector reform support on the ground. In this regard, it was recommended to focus on joint assessments, planning and evaluations. Moreover, a more coordinated effort to ensure that sufficient capacities are in place for training and equipping security forces on the one hand, and for capacity-building of governance and oversight mechanisms on the other, are crucial. A mapping of regional approaches and capacities in the area of security sector reform is already under way; support for this initiative was expressed as it presents an important step towards a shared understanding of the expertise available among the different partners.

Monitoring and evaluation of security sector reform support

Enhanced support to the monitoring and evaluation of security sector reform interventions was stressed as critical to the implementation of Security Council resolution 2151 (2014) and as a basis for transparent and evidence-based support in the area of security sector reform. The inter-agency Security Sector Reform Task Force has an important role to play in developing such an evidence-based approach to Security Sector Reform support. The inclusion of national counterparts at the earliest stages of such efforts is critical to joint agreement on benchmarks and indicators of progress, as relevant to the particular circumstances and aspirations of the host country.

The role of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform

The meeting also reflected on the role of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform in supporting the implementation of Security Council resolution 2151 (2014). The Co-Chairs outlined three priorities in that regard: first, to facilitate early dialogue and timely consultation on United Nations security sector reform strategies in country contexts; second, to support cooperation and security sector reform partnerships on the ground; and third, to lead intergovernmental dialogue and consensus-building on key security sector reform principles, as well as on different thematic areas of security sector reform. Enhanced cooperation with academia and experts from around the world was noted as important in this regard.

Security sector reform and the post-2015 development agenda

The link between security sector reform and the post-2015 development agenda was acknowledged, with particular emphasis on security sector reform as a link between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and hence as an important element of sustainable development for countries coming out of conflict. It was noted that the current intergovernmental agreement on the post-2015 development agenda presents a delicate political compromise that allowed for the integration of issues of governance, justice and public safety into the development agenda. The adoption of the concept of access to justice served as a platform for the development of a set of rights-based and socially inclusive goals and targets. The importance of the frameworks through which the United Nations addresses issues of conflict-related violence and violence that is not conflict-related was stressed.

Way forward

It was recommended that the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform provide possible input in close coordination with the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

(*Signed*) František **Ružička**
Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Kingsley **Mamabolo**
Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations